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not done. He must approach her through her father. He can and 584
does, however, propose in person to a widow or a divorced [587]
woman.

After marriage the Badawin takes his bride to the tent he has pre- 585
viously pitched for her, close to that of her father, and consummation takes place. Many are the curious eyes and ears which are concentrated on the bridal tent.

As with us, those chiefly interested in the marriage ceremony are the other women of the camp.

Slaves marrying go through the same ceremonies as the freeborn [567]
the master and mistress of the slave acting the part of the parents of the bridegroom: and as much interest is evinced in the marriage of one of their slaves as in that of one of the family.

The Badawin's love for cohabitation is well known, and as I have 831
said elsewhere, sex is to him the supreme joy of life. Both bride and bridegroom indulge riotously in this honeymoon period. So wildly passionate is their love-making that I have known of a man breaking two of his wife's ribs on the first night of their marriage. As soon as 842
the wife finds herself with child, she lets the other women know about it, and it becomes the occasion for much rejoicing. She continues cohabiting with her husband as a matter of course till just before the baby's birth.

DIVORCE

Divorce procedure is simplicity itself. The man need only say to 586
his wife before witnesses that he does not want her any more. He has to make the statement *three times* for it to be valid: *Ma arid ich, ma arid ich, ma arid ich.* No disgrace attaches to the woman, who takes the matter quite philosophically, and proceeds to look for another husband.

If the man divorces the woman, she keeps the *jehâz* he has given her, which is sufficient provision for her for a considerable time, or till she gets a second husband. It must not be forgotten that she has nearly always invested her *jehâz* in buying a camel or some sheep and has thus become an owner of livestock.

The point to emphasise is that no disgrace whatsoever clings to 587
divorce, and if the girl is fair, or was the wife of a big shaikh, there is

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837 Again, as in the desert, immorality is practically unknown among
684 unmarried girls. Married women on the contrary often indulge in clandestine intrigue. The penalty for immorality is death to the woman if she is found out. The woman's brothers and cousins always appear more concerned about their sister's honour than the father is, and if vengeance is to be carried out it is usually the brothers and cousins who track the woman down. As excuse they plead that they could not hold their heads up in tribal *majlis* if they had a sister living in dishonour. Marriage with the man who has led her astray is the only method that will save the girl's life. Even then the seducer must pay *kashm* or honour-money to satisfy the girl's relatives. A stranger man sometimes takes the place of the seducer and can get the girl off punishment by marrying her, but this is not common. *Fasl* or *'idiyah* is the term given to blood money. Among the Iraq *Ma'adán* (marsh) tribes a girl-relative of a murderer is nearly always given to the brother or son of the murdered person, the idea being that a child from the union of two enemy houses allays any hatred that might remain.

595 Among the Arab tribes of Iraq, as opposed to the *Ma'adán* (marsh-men), a man sets up a special tent or mat shelter called a *kausfa* for his wife to be taken to immediately after marriage. This is close to his house or tent as the case may be, and corresponds to a honeymoon tent. After the bride is taken to this *kausfa* by her women, the husband, arrayed in his best garments, is conveyed there by his men friends and consummates the marriage. The woman remains a prisoner in the *kausfa* for seven days. The man, on the contrary, may come out and receive visitors in his *mudhif* or nearby guest-tent. On the eighth day the woman comes out of her *kausfa*, goes into her new home and takes charge of the household duties. The custom of setting up the *kausfa* tent applies only if the girl has never been married before. If she be a widow she goes straight to her husband's tent.

LOVE

831 I have often been asked if love, as we know it, exists among the
595 Badawin. I have unhesitatingly replied that it does. The fact that a man is permitted to take more than a single wife has nothing to do with the matter. Indeed, it is rare to see a Badawin with more than

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one wife. He simply cannot afford such luxury. The majority marry, 831
of course, two or three times in their lives, either because the wife 675
has a temper, is lazy, is unreasonable, cannot have children, or gets sick and dies; but I have known a large number who have been faithful to one woman all their lives and regard the woman of their choice with affection and trust, even when she is old and decrepit. This proves constancy at any rate, which is not far removed from love.

In spite of their religion permitting men to take more than one wife, and in spite of easy and sensible divorce laws, the standard of morality among the dwellers in hair tents is one of the highest in the world: this naturally tends towards a high standard in family life, and 693
results in mutual admiration, companionship and trust between man and wife.

A Badawin marries primarily because he wants a helpmeet: some- 681
one to cook for him, to look after, mend and renew his tent. He must have someone to prepare his *leben*, to collect his firewood and to draw water for him and his camels. Above all, he must have children, and is only half a man until he has. Nevertheless, though he looks to the woman to be useful before everything else, there is always room for love and affection. Many cases of youths and maidens falling in love, and almost going crazed about each other, have come under my notice. It would take too long to relate them all. I shall confine myself to two. Both are stories of love gone wrong, of everything eventually coming right, and the parties living happily ever afterwards. From these examples my readers must form their own conclusions, and decide whether the desert man differs greatly from his Western brother. In both cases I knew the young actors intimately.

(a) *The love-story of Mutlog ibn Majid al Aqys of the Al Shaqair section of the Mutair.*

Young Mutlog was a shaikh's son of eighteen, well bred, good-looking, debonair, wiry and with a pair of long plaits (*gurun*) hanging down along both cheeks, that might have been the envy of any woman. He was an extraordinarily bright and happy lad, and on the last occasion when he came up to Kuwait, he had asked to be shown all over my house. His remark when he saw my wife's and my bedroom was characteristic, "*Wallah*" (*by God*) he said, "this sleeping

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CHAPTER XIII

Morality

517 There is no immorality, as we know it, among the desert tribes. There is, of course, plenty of marrying and giving in marriage, and as I have said, divorce is so easy that a woman often has six or seven husbands in her lifetime, and a man always as many wives as he can 948 afford, provided he confines himself to four at a time. Prostitutes are 137 unknown among the Badawin, and adultery is punishable with death.

572 Friendships between men and women, on the other hand, exist, and are recognised, especially if the parties are of the same tribe and are related, for example my friend Shaikh Thuwairan Abu Sifra of the Mu'aha section of the Mutair, was a friend of Muthi, wife of Falah bin 369 'A'amir, also of the Mu'aha. Every Badawin, of course, is aware that 518 immorality exists in the big towns, and this is one of the main reasons why he despises the townsman.

Unfortunately a Badawin man up from the distant desert sometimes finds his way to the prostitute quarters when he visits towns [64] such as Mecca and Madina, Jiddah, and Kuwait. This has resulted in the spread of syphilis and venereal disease among the tribes.

In Wahhabi-land proper (i.e. Sa'udi Arabia, excluding the Hijaz), no prostitute is tolerated even in the towns, let alone among the tribes, but I am told that there is nevertheless a good deal of clandestine immorality.

731 It is curious but true that if you discuss the question of morals with 622 well-informed Najd Badawin, they will always tell you that certain great shaikhly families of the desert, especially in the north, have always had rather loose morals, while certain others stand out for their good morals and generally high tone. For instance, the well-known shaikhly house of Al Sha'alan (Ruwala) as well as that of the Hawaitat, Bani Sakhr (both Trans-Jordan), and Shammar Jarba (Iraq), are all said to be pretty lax where women are concerned, and conversely Al Hadhal (Amarat), the Dushan (Mutair) and the Hamidda ('Utaiba)

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further east and south, very strict. The whole desert world will certainly agree that the shaikhs of the tribes of Najd proper are far superior in moral behaviour to their brothers of Iraq and Syria, and for that matter of the north generally, and they never cease to deplore and at the same time boast of the fact. This is of course all good propaganda for the Ruler of Sa'udi Arabia and for Wahhabi-ism, and justifies up to the hilt His Majesty King 'Abdul 'Aziz's policy of keeping strangers as far as possible out of his country, and in particular out of Central Arabia.

Undoubtedly the proximity to Damascus and Baghdad of the Northern 'Anizah and Shammar is slowly but surely demoralising the leaders, though not yet the rank and file. The coming of the motor car is also hastening the process. To their great credit Al Hadhal (Amarat) and notably their great chief Shaikh Mahruth have and are still keeping themselves free from the poison of the towns, but how long they will keep themselves and their people uncontaminated by the great cities is a question.

MORALITY IN THE TOWNS

Mecca is recognised as one of the most immoral towns in Arabia. If one can believe the Badawin, every form of foul vice prevails there.

In Kuwait for a woman to lapse and be found out, usually means death. Her brothers or cousins are her executioners. The husband is more tolerant.

If an unmarried girl goes astray, her lapse is punishable with stoning or "walling up" in a small room, where only one coffee-cup of water and a few dates are given her through a hole in the ceiling per day. If she survives this starvation treatment for forty days, God is supposed to have intervened and she is set free.

A man may without much disgrace indulge in strange women, provided they are public ones, and work for hire. The condition is that he behave so discreetly as not to let the world know. This is most important.

Nice Arab women have on occasion suggested to me that in the absence of my family in England it would be permissible if I occasionally patronised a gay lady's establishment of good standing.

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567 will follow to the death in his efforts to effect a rescue, and will kill the stealer if he can, even if he has to wait years to do so.

(*d*) If in a raid a freed slave (*ma'atiq*), male or female, be carried off in error, it is the duty of the raiders to return him or her as soon as the mistake is found out.

(*e*) No true Arab may lawfully marry a freed slave woman. His *ahl* will kill him if he so disgraces the tribal honour and blood.

The recognition of these rules, and several others, was confirmed on 11th August, 1936, by Shaikh Nahar al Mutalaqim of the Al Hadi tribe of the 'Ajman, and also by Shaikh 'Ubaid al Mutraqqa al Harri of the Diyahin section of the Mutair, both of whom added the following interesting bit of information, which was new to me. They emphasised that the *'asil*, or pure-bred Arab, will never demean himself by having sexual connection with any of his bought female slaves. It is considered very *'aib* (disgraceful) to do so.

Unfortunately this excellent rule has been abused among certain noble and princely semi-Badawin families such as the Al Sa'adun, and others, who argue that because a slave-girl is your property entirely, she is yours to do with as you like, without sin. The Badawin proper, to his honour, refuses utterly to accept this method of arguing and calls it town sophistry. It is one of the things that causes him to despise the *hadhari*, or town dweller, and take proportionate pride in himself.

[731] *Footnotes.*—(*a*) There is a curious and widely accepted belief, among Arab townsmen especially, that to have connection with a negress makes a man sexually strong once more (*'iqwi dhakru*), if he happens to be suffering from debility.

(*b*) Shaikh 'Ubaid al Mutraqqa al Harri boasts that it is the immemorial right of his house to take over all slaves and mares captured in war or raid by any of his Diyahin followers. This is a right rarely found among Badawin tribes. Its existence was confirmed by Shaikh Hillel al Munairi, of the same tribe.

(*c*) I have purposely not discussed the Georgian, Armenian and Circassian slave-girl, as a separate chapter would be required to deal with this class. Suffice to say that many beautiful women of this class exist among the ruling and rich classes of Arabia, Iraq and neighbouring Muslim countries. Their lot is not an unhappy one either, for as a rule they are bought very young and are treated with great consideration.